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The good guys

Xavier Agombar checks out an OPP ATV with officer Royland Madden during First Responders Day at the Minden Hills fire hall on May 1. /KAREN LONDON staff

Enviro group wants to keep AH in the dark

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

A group in Algonquin Highlands is working to shed light on the importance of maintaining a dark sky.

There are six of what's called Dark Sky Preserves in Ontario. And Algonquin Highlands township council heard during its May 1 meeting about an effort toward possibly limiting artificial light in the area.

Dark sky policies are a means to try to reduce light pollution in favour of preserving the night sky's natural darkness. Limiting unnecessary artificial light, especially light directed skyward, benefits people, animals, and insects.

In fact, Haliburton County students Ella Honey and Angus McBride conducted research last fall into artificial light's impacts on animals and insects at three sites on Paudash Lake. Their project was conducted with the U-Links Centre for Community Based Research and supervised by Trent University professor Dr. David Beresford.

They found that cooler white light of lower wavelengths were not as harmful to nocturnal animals and insects and contributed less to what's called skyglow. That's what blots out the stars and constellations in the night sky.

Deputy Mayor Jennifer Dailloux, who represents council on the township's environmental and stewardship committee, said there's been more interest among the public in dark skies.

It has been on committee meeting agendas for a number of years, she said.

Municipal staff have been consulted on the possibility of pursuing various avenues toward something akin to a dark sky policy in Algonquin Highlands.

Based on the committee's research and feedback from Sean O'Callaghan, the town's planner, Dailloux said it is recommended that council take a harder formal look at a possible dark sky policy.

As per the recorded minutes of the committee's March 4 meeting: The environment and stewardship committee resolved to request council further investigate dark sky policies with consideration to measures to preserve dark skies in the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

Mayor Liz Danielsen asked if municipal staff or committee members are expected to do the investigation.

"We have already done quite a bit of research on what different kinds of dark sky policies are currently in effect in Ontario, in rural areas, in areas close to parks, in reserve spaces," Dailloux said. "We did that, we passed it along to staff."

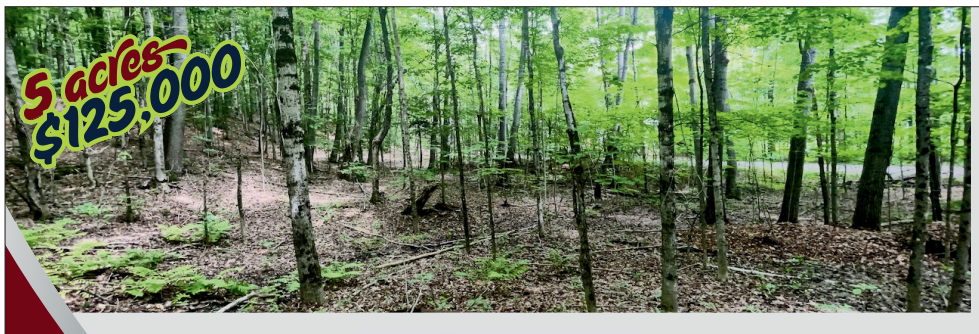
She said the next stage of the process would be determining the legislative framework to adopt an official dark sky policy.

"Which is more of a staff point of expertise than a general committee member point of expertise," Dailloux said.

Options for addressing dark skies within municipal jurisdiction include inclusion in a property standards bylaw or a standalone dark skies bylaw designating an area as a Dark Sky Preserve. This process is through the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

Two case studies were discussed by the committee: The District of Muskoka

see DARK page 2



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Minden ends state of emergency

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

As of May 5, the Township of Minden Hills has officially ended their significant weather event declaration, which was enacted on March 28, as well as their state of emergency, which has been in place since March 31. "After 36 days, our current situation is stable," said Minden Mayor Bob Carter. "The initial ice storm had a significant impact on our power and communication networks across the municipality followed by extremely high-water levels posing a flood watch/warning for our area."

The mayor noted that while the declarations have been lifted, the aftermath of the storm will be ongoing, citing this current stage as "a recovery phase," which will be continuing on for the foreseeable future.

While spring water levels were unpredictable in light of increased precipitation, the Gull River appears stable. Excess debris from the ice storm was clogging up culverts and further increasing water levels, but collaboration between the County of Haliburton and Minden Township staff have mitigated the major areas of concern. "Clean up of tree debris on our road allowances will occur over the next few weeks," said Carter, "and fees for brush drop off are currently waived at the Scotch Line Landfill."

At this time, all township offices and facilities are open. A community clean-up is being organized by the County of Haliburton, and will be formally announced later this week.

"I would like to thank the provincial government and our local elected officials for all their support during this emergency," said Carter. "My appreciation to the community who came together and helped neighbours and those in need – it is such an honour to witness the community spirit with the acts of care and kindness that occurred across Minden Hills. I humbly say thank you."

Wigamog catches fire

At 4:20 a.m. on Saturday, May 3, the Dysart Fire Department was called to the historic Wigamog Inn on Kashagawigamog Lake to deal with a structure fire. Crews were able to quell the flames, but not before significant damage was done to the main structure of the facility. The fire was contained to the upper floor, with flames coming through the roof. To put the flames out, there were 13 firefighters from Haliburton, and four from Minden. The cause of fire is unknown at this time. /photo submitted

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Dark sky policy may work better than a bylaw, says mayor

from page 1

Torrance Barrens and the City of Guelph. The Township of Georgian Bay also has a dark sky policy.

The committee requested information on the Algonquin Highlands' existing policies for reducing light pollution from municipal facilities.

Danielsen said a dark sky bylaw isn't something council could look into. But something along the lines of a policy may be doable.

"That's why we would like staff to outline if it can't be a bylaw in the way we were thinking before, could the other examples that we've pulled from other areas in Ontario possibly apply?" Dailloux said.

It was suggested that residents be surveyed about the importance of a dark sky policy.

Danielsen said much work has been done to lower lighting at some township facilities. But that raised concerns about security at and around those facilities during the night.

Angie Bird, the township's CAO, said there has been a challenge with the lights at the tennis courts turning on at odd hours of the night. Because those lights are set by timers, the settings are changed due to power outages when they happen.

"We've worked at making sure those timers are appropriate," Bird said.

When maintenance work is done at municipal facilities, lights are changed to LED lighting. And she said that lighting has been directed downward.

Dailloux suggested that people be asked in the survey which township facilities are considered to be too bright.

> "We have already done quite a bit of research on what different kinds of dark sky policies are currently in effect in Ontario ...
>
> — AH DEPUTY MAYOR JENNIFER DAILLOUX

"Just to know what those hot spots might be," Dailloux said.

"I'm not sure that I would agree with doing that," Danielsen said. "I'd rather keep it more general. If there are specific things that the committee would like to recommend that we do for our facilities, that's fine."

The mayor said excessive lighting and skyglow is likely more of a concern about properties around lakes.

Regulations stall housing development in AH

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

A Habitat for Humanity build in Algonquin Highlands is on hold pending direction from Haliburton County.

Algonquin Highlands township staff have been working with Habitat for Humanity on a proposed housing project on a piece of municipal property.

Sean O'Callaghan, the township's planner, said the proposed scale of the development would require significant on-site servicing. The municipal Official Plan and that of Haliburton County as well as the zoning by-law won't permit that development.

"But there were discussions of communal servicing," he said. "So that's something that the county is going to be bringing a report to county council later this summer."

He said the project is stalled until a resolution or some kind of direction is given at the county level.

"The county has established a municipal services corporation which is a requirement of the communal servicing aspect," O'Callaghan said. "But that corporation right now is formed primarily to deal with the municipal accommodation tax that's received through the short-term rental licensing."

So the corporation is geared more toward tourism-related initiatives and isn't in a place right now to deal with communal servicing.

That will be a topic of discussion later in the summer.

"Unfortunately right now we are on hold until that discussion or direction has taken place," O'Callaghan said.

According to a report to township council, municipal staff held preliminary discussions with a potential developer of previously identified parcels of vacant land. The density of the proposed development far exceeded the permitted number of units.

Mayor Liz Danielsen said during council's May 1 meeting that a number of councillors have asked about efforts to alleviate the housing crunch in Algonquin Highlands.

"It really is a very big challenge for us here," she said and suggested draft policies could be inked with the aim of helping the administrative process along.

She assumed the township will require its own municipal corporation at some point to facilitate such development and to accommodate the setup of communal servicing.

> "There were discussions of communal servicing, so that's something that the county is going to be bringing a report to county council later this summer.
>
> – SEAN O'CALLAGHAN, AH PLANNER

"Is there anything we can do in advance in preparation for it, just to be kind of ready?" Danielsen said.

O'Callaghan said there's nothing that can be done at the municipal level right now.

"It does live at the county level," he said. "The corporations, I don't believe we would have to establish one locally. It would live at the county."

About all that can be done at the lower tier level is to research the ins and outs of communal water and sewer servicing.

"Once this corporation is established to be able to deal with that, we'll be able to take steps at a municipal level to support this kind of development," he said. "I think it's important, though, that council realizes we are doing a lot of support affordable housing development within the local level."

Most recently, he said township zoning bylaws were retooled to permit secondary dwellings on most properties excluding the waterfront. And that's something staff has been getting queries about, indicating more public interest.

There are limited options for higher density housing options in rural municipalities like Algonquin Highlands.

Staff is doing what can be done to encourage residential development in the area.

Danielsen said it seems as if approvals for communal servicing is more easily and quickly obtained by developers than municipal corporations.

"I find that very hard to accept, but far be it from us to be able to say what upper levels of government can do," she said.

Minden cell tower raises concerns

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Times Staff

Residents along Bobcaygeon Road and the surrounding area are questioning the approval of a 70-metre cell tower structure being built on private land..

The proposed tower is located northeast of the Bobcaygeon Road and Scotch Line intersection in Minden. Flyers were distributed to a broader area, with residents being notified of the plans for the tower in February of this year. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) requires residents within 210 metres of the tower be notified as part of public consultation

David Hessels, a resident of Bobcaygeon Road says that residents within one kilometre of the proposed tower had been notified. In that one kilometre catchment, there are around 20 residential properties with homes built onsite. Feedback to the proposal was due on March 3, and many say that they did not receive the notice, despite living within the one kilometre catchment area; possibly due to damage to mailboxes and interruptions with services.

Frustrated, Hessels, as well as other residents that were notified, have been seeking for the township to speak against the tower.

Primarily, residents have cited their concerns being their health, environmental impact, the view, reduction of property values, and the general lack of wanting the tower near their properties.

Of the 20 properties that were notified of the pending construction, 13 have responded to the Hessels in agreement that the tower is not needed. With several of these homes having people working from home, it is unclear where the need for the tower is coming from, says Hessels.

The Township of Minden Hills does not have a formal Tower Protocol Policy, and land use requirements refer to any relevant policies in the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law. Similar cell towers such as the proposed one on Minnicock Lake Road have also seen staunch opposition from nearby residents.

Hessels says that he and his partner have reached out to councillors of Minden Hills, but have received replies saying that they have no control or say over the matter.

Ultimately, ISED does not require municipal approval to build a cell tower.

"Concerns of citizens on Bob Lake and Brady Lake have similarly been pushed aside without proper consideration," said Hessels.

While the tower has not gone to council yet, the Hessels and other residents in opposition of the tower feel that they have not been provided an adequate opportunity to publicly speak against the build.

At the time of publication, the tower had not yet begun construction.

The *Times* will continue coverage as the story develops.

www.mindenhills.ca

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Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

May 8 – Regular Council Meeting
May 13 – Special Council Meeting
May 29 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

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STATE OF EMERGENCY ENDED

As recommended by the Community Emergency Management Coordinator, Fire Chief Don Kruger and the Emergency Operations Commander, CAO Cynthia Fletcher, the Township of Minden Hills has officially terminated the state of emergency effective May 5, 2025. Please visit our website for further information.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The second installment for Interim tax bills is due May 23, 2025. Property Owners are responsible to provide the Municipal Office (7 Milne St, Minden) with written notification of any address change. As per the Ontario Municipal Act, 2001, failure to receive your tax bill does not exempt penalty charges from being applied to tax account. Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

Take Notice there will be a Special Meeting of Council held Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 9:00 AM in the Minden Hills Council Chambers, located at 7 Milne Street, Minden, ON. The purpose of the Special meeting is to provide an additional Council meeting that is dedicated to a series of applications for the Planning Department. The Special meeting will consist of:
7 Public Meetings as follows:

- PLZBA2025004 – Wilson
- PLZBA2025009 – 2640599 Ontario Inc
- PLZBA2025012 – Binnendyk
- PLZBA2025014 – Haynes and Thistle
- PLZBA2025015 – Calvieri
- PLZBA2025022 – Barry
- PLZBA2025025 – Howell
- 1 Presentation (Eastern Ontario Regional Network – Communication Towers)
- 9 Shoreline Road Allowance Application Reports
- 1 Mapping Updates Report

Please visit our website for further information.

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On-demand bus service will better serve county: council

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

Haliburton County is seeking proposals for an operator to run an on-demand public transit service.

Council heard during its April 23 meeting that staff is recommending another request for proposals be issued for a demand responsive transit service that would service the geographic area around Minden and Haliburton.

Scott Ovell, the county's economic development and tourism director, said it represents an expanded service area than what was considered in a March 2024 RFP.

The county currently has $182,601 in a Transit Reserve to support such a service. And a funding plan could be provided to council as part of the 2026 budget.

Ovell said staff issued a RFP last year for a fixed route transit service between Minden and Haliburton. A single response was received and council choose not to proceed with the project at that time.

"We did receive one bid that was very costly," he said.

Staff looked to other rural municipalities over the winter to see how public transit is provided elsewhere.

Ovell said an on-demand or a demand responsive transit service could work in Haliburton County. They're frequently implemented in rural Ontario and can provide a variety of service delivery options for a larger area with less population.

He said savings have been achieved in some of the jurisdictions that have on-demand or a demand responsive transit service.

Ovell said those cost savings come from vehicles not having to travel empty over fixed routes on a schedule.

The taxi service in Haliburton County in recent months has become extremely limited, further impacting transit challenges. Many residents are being required to book days in advance of their appointments or travel plans with no guarantees the taxi service will be able to accommodate their needs.

Deputy Warden Liz Danielsen, who is the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, applauded the continued effort to initiate public transit in the county.

"I would like to see the option included for the entirety of the county," she said. "Algonquin Highlands is not interested in paying for a service that's only going to serve Minden Hills and Dysart et al."

She suggested Highlands East residents may feel the same, especially since that township enjoys a transportation agreement with nearby Bancroft.

"I don't think it's fair that we would pay for services that do nothing for Algonquin Highlands," she said.

Gary Dyke, the county's CAO, said the proposed transit type has the flexibility to serve beyond the County Road 21 corridor.

"It may not arrive at anything, but it's at least something we have the ability to look at," he said.

"There is great advantage to making this happen," said Councillor Cecil Ryall, the deputy mayor of Highlands East.

"I thought we were elected to represent the people of Haliburton County," said Coun. Murray Fearrey, Dysart's mayor. "Not to start picking and choosing how we're going to separate the funding."

> "I think we have to look at whether we're here as Haliburton County or we're here as four individual municipalities."
> — MINDEN MAYOR BOB CARTER

He said there are other instances in which another of the four lower tier municipalities benefits while Dysart pays more than it should for that service.

"This is going to happen all the time," Fearrey said.

Coun. Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills, said transportation is one of the key issues for rural communities.

"It's got to start somewhere and it's never going to get to the outlying districts unless it starts at the centre," Carter said. "I think we have to look at whether we're here as Haliburton County or we're here as four individual municipalities."

Ovell said he has no issue with modifying the project's scope to include a possible service for the entire county.

Ryall said it isn't fair to pay for a service that will benefit only two municipalities.

"There needs to be some kind of adjustment in the fee structure," he said.

Dyke said transit would initially directly affect Minden Hills and Dysart. But one of the things the county has been told while working to recruit health care professionals and to lure businesses is that the lack of public transit is an issue. The county as a whole will benefit with new physicians and businesses.

"You may not be getting 100 per cent of the direct benefit from a service, but there also is the indirect benefit to the broader community with respect to your health care, with respect to the growth to the overall business side," he said.

Danielsen said she didn't mean to suggest she doesn't support a public transit system in the county. She said it's needed and she would like to see it proceed to fruition.

"We need to have some insight as to where this could lead us to," Ryall said.

Before equipment is acquired and any leases are inked, he said the county needs to know where the costs and benefits are going to fall.

"Once we do that, then we have a better idea of where we are going," Ryall said.

The bid received last year projected an annual cost of about $685,000. And that concerns Coun. Walt McKechnie, who is the deputy mayor of Dysart.

"It'd be great to find out exactly what that number is going to be," he said. "But I think we're talking about a lot of money here."

"I don't think I would be here if I thought I was coming back with a tender that was going to be around $650,000 again," Ovell said. "But we've got to figure out what's out there."

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The Repeat Offender Parole Enforcement (R.O.P.E.) Squad is requesting the public's assistance in locating a federal offender wanted on a Canada Wide Warrant for breaching a condition of his Statutory Release.

Justin Smith is described as an Indigenous male, 26 years old, 6'0" (182 cm), 180 lbs (82 kgs). Smith has several tattoos:

- Right cheek - a star
- Right side of neck - "Jenna"
- Left Cheek- Tear drop and a small cross
- Left Hand - "Louis Vuitton" and five dots
- Left Forearm - "Trust" and praying hands
- Right Hand - "K:P"

Justin Smith is serving a three-year, one day, sentence for;

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- Fail To Comply with Probation Order
- Fail To Comply with Order-At Large

The offender is known to frequent Peterborough, Lindsay, Durham Region and Toronto.

Anyone having contact with this offender or information in regards to their whereabouts is asked to contact the Provincial R.O.P.E. Squad at 416-808-5900 or toll free at 1-866-870-7673 (ROPE) or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or call 9-1-1.

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Keep wildfire safety in mind post-ice storm

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Times Staff

Haliburton County and its surrounding areas are no strangers to forest fires.

On September 9, 1887, a forest fire started to the west of Furnace Falls. The little village burned to the ground, including their ore smelter, saw mill, and every building in the vicinity of the town. What was once a small, fledgling village turned to a ghost town in the aftermath.

In 1912, a forest fire blazed from Lake Simcoe to Bancroft, reaching Little Bob Lake in Minden. The fire stopped due to that year's first snowfall.

In 1913, a fire once again tore through Snowdon township, putting an end to its lumber industry.

The Bark Lake Fire of 1949 started outside of Irondale and burned to nearly two kilometres outside of Minden. Exhausted of people and resources, conscription was declared, asking every capable man to fight the fire.

The *Toronto Telegram* writes "driving last night from Irondale to Minden was like driving through Pomepii in its last days, the London Blitz, plain Hell and fairyland. Weary men, still fighting, still losing after four days, their heavy flannel shirts singed, lined the road."

An additional forest fire began west of Kinmount, near Davis Lake, and required 400 more volunteers to fight the flames.

In recent years, forest fires have made international headlines with record-breaking fires in 2023. Unprecedented high temperatures and drought conditions fueled the flames across the country.

In June, 120 wildfires started in Quebec in one day due to lightning. SOPFEU, Quebec's forest fire prevention office, reported that there were over 700 fires in 2023, burning 4.5 million hectares of forest. This made international headlines after the smoke heavily reduced visibility in Toronto and filled the New York City skyline with an orange haze.

Currently, the Ministry of Natural Resource's Fire Info Map indicates that there is already a sizable area of forest elevated to the medium levels of forest fire risk. These are stretches from Twelve Mile Lake in Minden to Kushog Lake in Algonquin Highlands to Cranberry Lake in West Guilford and Kennisis Lake.

In the wake of the ice storm, residents are encouraged to FireSmart their properties. This includes removing available fuel sources like downed limbs and branches.

Instead of burning them on your property, the township of Minden Hills' Scotchline Landfill is accepting brush at no charge to residents.

Despite the recent rain, the chance of a wildfire can change at a moment's notice.

"Each fire season is highly variable and is based on actual weather trends that are developing in the short-term throughout the fire season," said Alison Lake, fire information officer with the Ministry of Natural Resources. "Knowing this, we look at a three to five day window of weather conditions as we move through the fire season and adjust accordingly. Current and forecasted wildland fire conditions are being continuously and carefully monitored to ensure sufficient resources will be available to respond to wildland fires."

> "The simple act of having an outdoor campfire or burning off yard waste can quickly lead to a larger fire."
>
> —ALISON LAKE, FIRE INFORMATION OFFICER WITH THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Spring is the season for grass fires in the county. With the previous year's leaves and dead grass remaining, it dries and becomes "tinder-ready," says Lake.

"The simple act of having an outdoor campfire or burning off yard waste can quickly lead to a larger fire," said Lake.

Around 50 per cent of all wildland fires are caused by lightning, whereas the remaining 50 per cent are caused by human factors including broken power lines, sparks from an ATV on dry grass, or an unattended campfire, says Lake.

It is not just damage from the flames themselves to worry about. Smoke from wildland fires can travel for thousands of kilometres.

"Fires can have extreme impacts on local air quality, visibility and human health," said Lake. "For individuals interested in observing smoke forecasts they can use FireSmoke.ca to access current and forecasted smoke conditions."

The Wildland Fire Management Strategy acts as the directions for how the MNR handles wildland fires across Ontario. The five goals of the strategy include prevention, mitigation, response, understanding, and application. The threat of wildland fires is diminished when more fires are prevented, property owners must take action to mitigate their property's risk of damage due to wildland fire, fires are assessed and responded to accordingly, Ontarians must be aware and understand the ecological importance of wildland fires, and fires and prescribed burns are utilized to reduce wildland fire hazards and meet ecological and resource management goals.

Every fire will be different due to factors like the fuel source, level of dryness, and causes of the fire, says Lake. Wildfires can be spread by embers blowing, radiant heat, and direct flame exposure.

When needed, Ontario has a fleet of 28 aircraft including CL-415 heavy water bombers, eight intermediate helicopters, six Twin Otters, and five Turbo Beavers at our disposal to combat wildfires.

"Ontario also supplements its airfleet by hiring commercial aircraft throughout the season, including through long-term contracts with air carriers and short-term aircraft hires," said Lake.

All residents are urged to be fire aware and report any fires or smoke that is seen. If you see an uncontrolled fire, call 9-1-1 immediately. Also take note of the location, colour, and size of the fire, if able.

No fires should be left unattended. To put a campfire out, soak it with a generous amount of water. Then, stir the coals and embers of the fire with a stick and soak it generously again.

"To dispose of yard waste and woody debris, we encourage residents to use methods such as composting or disposing at a local landfill," said Lake.

Both municipalities of Minden Hills and Algonquin Highlands prohibit daytime burning from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Fires should never be started two hours before dawn or two hours after sunrise.

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The 'A' word

IT'S A dreaded term for many. Councillors and township staff shudder at the thought.

The almighty 'A' word.

The one that shall not be named.

But for the sake of this editorial, let's dive in.

'Amalgamation'.

Yes, we've all said it out loud before. Maybe not in places of power or in public spotlights, but quietly, at dinner parties. Maybe after some liquid courage.

"Don't you think it would be easier if they just…worked together?"

"Don't say it!" someone would quip across the room; feta cheese appetizer poised in their fingers. "Never utter that 'A' word!"

If there's one word that's had circles talked around it for years on end, it's 'amalgamation'. Some people are sick of hearing about it. Others refuse to open their eyes to it, unwilling to fight that uphill battle.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

It's complicated. Messy. Stirs up emotions. Causes rifts. Turns friends into enemies, lovers into strangers.

But as I read this week about the premise of transportation across the county, the 'A' word cropped into my mind. Each individual mayor had concerns about the cost of the project. And naturally so. These mayors are elected to put their communities on the forefront. Top of mind, at all times.

And I agree. One municipality should not be paying into a project that will largely only benefit the neighboring municipalities. As a taxpayer, I do care where my dollars go.

But, as perhaps an unpopular opinion, what if we all care for the greater good? Public transportation seems to be the hitch in no end of failed plans. It's the missing puzzle piece for accessible housing, for efficient staffing, for filling in a wealth of flailing gaps our community continues to fall into.

Perhaps the immediate solution is not a blanketed amalgamation of communities. Because trust me, I recognize the complications of overlapping responsibilities.

If I can once again use the phrase that makes me cringe every time I hear it: this is the way it's always been done.

It's challenging to push outside the comfort zone. To punch out of the cracks and crevices of light beyond the encompassing roadblocks and settle into a space of comfort and security in the unknown.

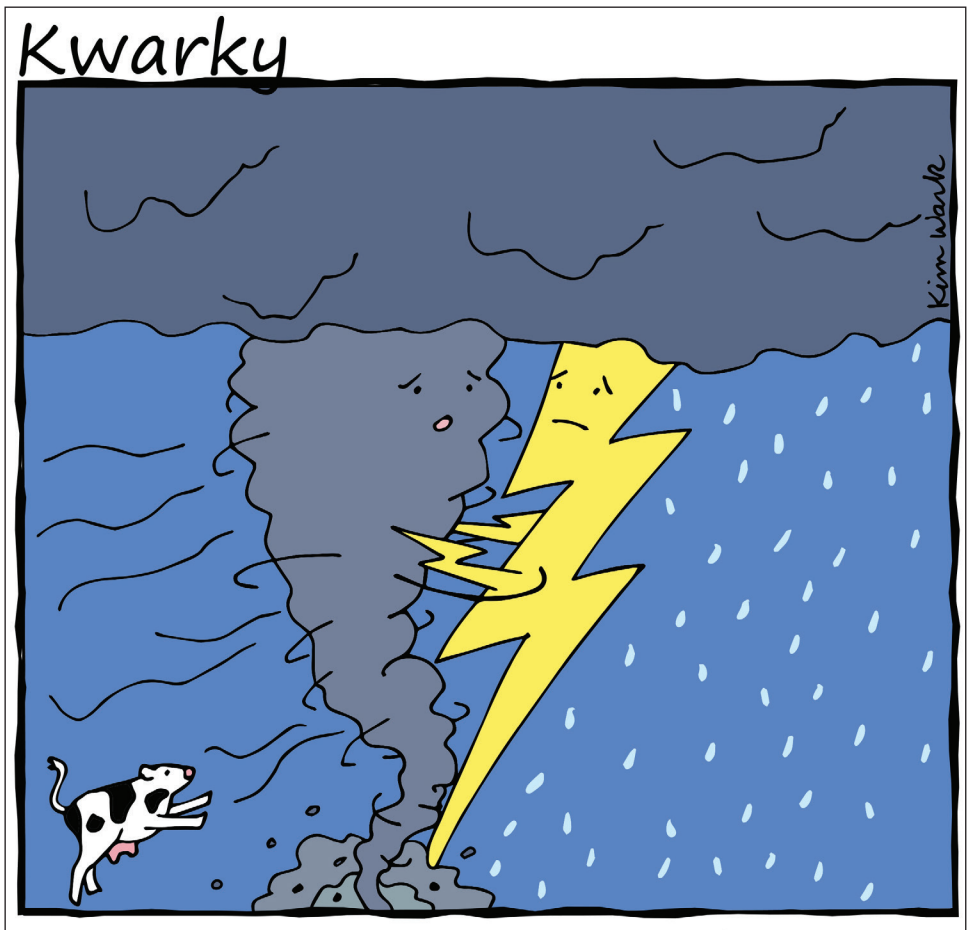
But when we look at a map, those arbitrary lines of my problem versus your problem, perhaps we can start observing it under the light of the greater good.

Services that would benefit more people like housing, transportation, employment - those are things we can take off the map, and observe what we need as a community to thrive.

And while we are nestled into four separate municipalities; each with their own priorities, their own goals, their own people, I recognize the arbitrary lines of us versus them. I see the value in what each community can bring, and yes, we can still celebrate that.

While simultaneously reaching beyond the lines of limitations; offering support and care and consideration beyond the boundaries. Not just for us, but for others.

So maybe the 'A' word should be taken off the taboo table and put on the map, if we want to support the greater good.



High water marks

LAST MONDAY, a friend of mine decided to go trout fishing on one of the rivers we catch brook trout on. I could not join him because that was the day we moved into our new house.

And while I regret not going, if you can't make it to the trout stream, the next best thing is having a reliable fishing buddy who can.

A friend like that provides second hand knowledge that adds to the third-hand knowledge you will tell your friends about the place. But, as always with fishing buddies, you must take in all that info with a grain of salt. Sometimes, a whole shaker…

For instance, after he returned, I asked my friend about the water level and current.

He summarized by saying the river was high, but wadable. He also said he caught a 20-inch brook trout.

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

Most inexperienced anglers would just accept that as gospel. But old hand like me factor a few things into the assessment. My friend, for instance, is in his late 20s and is somewhere around 6-foot-1. Also, he probably has never slipped in fast water, so he's still optimistic and probably does not even consider it to be a possibility.

On the other hand, I am 5-foot-3 and 63 years of age. That means, what is chest high to him is chin level to me. And while a 20-something year old angler can wade in fast water that reaches thigh level or more, an angler who possesses the high mileage and used parts I have would be in a precarious situation once reaching shin level. Also, forgive me for indulging in medical jargon, but my gyroscope is not what it used to be.

All this is to say that his version of high but wadable translates a little different for me.

Basically, it would mean that the moment I stepped in, water would go over my waders. Then, I'd back out to shore, get out of my waders, empty them, get back into my now wet waders, and step in slightly past shin level. Then I would start to fish while trying to balance precariously in the flow. Then, just as I am finding my balance, a big trout will hit the fly that I am dangling in the water but not even fishing yet. This will cause me to reflexively set the hook, which will a) cause the fish to spit it out and b) throw me off balance and cause me to fall and get swept away by the current, which will be OK since my inflatable personal floatation device will go off and keep me afloat until I wash up on a gravel bar several hundred metres and three waterfalls downstream.

The good news is that I will have hooked a small 8-inch brook trout along the way, which I will brag about and use as proof positive that my new "technique" works as I had imagined.

"It's all about covering a lot of water," I'll tell my angling friends.

Then, after getting home, I will get a call from a buddy who couldn't make this trip. He will ask about the water level and current.

I will then tell him about the "20-inch" brookie I caught. Then I will tell him that the river is high, but wadable …

InOtherWords

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Planning for dementia

WHEN DEMENTIA comes calling on you or someone dear to you, what's your plan?

I say 'when' not 'if' because the numbers say it's likely: Alzheimer's Canada says in Jan. 1, 2025, 771,939 Canadians were diagnosed with dementia, and because age is the best indicator of probability and we are a greying demography, that number will grow exponentially. Furthermore, that number reflect people who are diagnosed with dementia, and those of us with lived experience know that the disease is well on its way long before it's diagnosed.

So it makes sense to think about what our options are when dementia comes knocking.

Maybe there'll be a cure by then, or at least some intervention that buys time. Maybe there'll be a miraculous increase in the quantity, quality and scope of community-based and residential care options. Maybe they'll be affordable to the common folk.

FAY MARTIN
Poke, Peel, Pair, Ponder

But maybe not.

But if, as appears most probable, we will be left to manage as best we can, what can we do?

I recently visited, as part of an academic study group, two Green Care Farms (GCFs) in the Netherlands, two examples of many variations in that part of the world of non-medical approaches to day-care programs and residential homes for people with dementia. They validated most of what I thought I'd learned caring for my husband as he slid into dementia and died, at home, in his own bed, with but not of dementia.

I always thought he wasn't that far along in the illness because until the week before his death, he managed what the system calls Daily Living Activities. People (their word for residents or patients) in GCFs were medically assessed at Stage 5 of dementia (requiring 7/24 supervision) to be eligible for funding. They tended to manage their daily lives in the embrace of the GCF community – where the philosophy was to do 'with' not 'for' -- until about a week before they took to their beds and died.

They tended to sleep well, attributed to having had a full day of taking care of business, outdoors when weather permitted, but always engaged in meaningful activity and exposed to nature.

Aggression tended to be manageable by adapting circumstances to avoid triggering anger or frustration. Injuries from falls were rare, in part because residents, even when doddering, had stronger muscles and better balance because of their active life. But also because people expected and paid attention to dicey situations.

Surveillance was managed by fitting those with a tendency to go walkabout with a GPS monitor, and more importantly, making human sense of the behaviour. Care-givers accepted the need to visit, to go places, to walk (in a culture much more walk-oriented than ours). They kept an eye on progress, and when the person stopped or the staff figured they'd be reaching the limits of their stamina, someone would get in a vehicle and fetch them, and they'd be happy to return home.

And 'home' (for a couple years on average before dying in their bed) was an intentionally created and nurtured community. People typically came to day-care for months, maybe years, until making a seamless transition into full-time living in the community when it became necessary, whether because of diminished capacity on their part or that of their living circumstances. One of the GCFs was developing suites on site for caregivers to rent, so they didn't have to maintain two living accommodations, could lead an independent life with easy access to their person – and doubtless, with propinquity, increase their contribution to the community's life.

Could we provide a GCF option here in Canada? The major impediments is culture: we seem dedicated to prolonging life regardless of its quality (complicated re: dementia by the difficulty a person with dementia has with articulating quality). My favourite GCF's organizing principle was that every day should be filled with joy and purposeful activity, i.e. that life should be lived with the pleasure of purpose until we die. Like the cycle of nature. That particular GCF had a wait list for participants (not surprising) and for staff (as unusual there as here). They prioritized hiring people who looked happy and were willing to un-learn. They vigorously protected their work culture with everyday, granular repetition to ensure that every component of the community was marching to the same live-till-you-die drumbeat.

It's a good drum-beat for any of us. The flipside of my sense of validation that I had done a pretty good job of creating the conditions under which my husband's dementia didn't prevent him from having a good final chapter is that I'm not as scared of dementia as I was. I know the plan.

Minden Memories

Making maple syrup has been a spring tradition in the Highlands since the earliest settlers, serving as an important source of sugar. This photo, from John Hulbig's collection, was taken in the 1920s in the Hartle hardwood bush near Minden, between Highways 121 and 35. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

letters to the editor

Thanks to community

To the Editor,

We would like to publicly thank Hydro One employees, Parks Canada, municipal councillors and staff, and all the volunteers who assisted the community during the most recent emergency.

Kathy and Fraser Rogers
Minden

CORRECTION

In the April 30 edition of the *Minden Times*, a photo of the Minden Hills cemetery clean up said John Daignault was fixing stones around the grave of his father. This was an unfortunate miscommunication. John Daignault's father is happily living in Florida. Our apologies to the Daignault family and the family of the gravesite.

The *Minden Times* apologies for this error.

HCPL's Book of the Week

Métis cousins Isidore "Ezzy" Desjarlais and Grey Ginther spend their days drinking and playing cribbage in a rundown trailer. Grey, disillusioned by performative activism, has a radical idea: free a herd of bison from a national park and release them in downtown Edmonton as a protest against settler colonialism. She recruits Ezzy, who is devoted to her despite his troubled past. As the plan unfolds, Grey grows obsessed with the mission, pushing boundaries and putting them and those around them in increasing danger. Their act of resistance spirals into chaos, leading to devastating and fatal consequences.

Prairie Edge by Conor Kerr is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

First Responders Day

First Responders Day 2025 celebrated in Haliburton County

by **MICHAEL RILEY**
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Kevin Alcock shows visitors how to try on fire gear at the Algonquin Highlands Fire Department.

The Jaws of Life on display in Stanhope during First Responders Day. /photos submitted

First Responders Day was celebrated in Haliburton County on May 1 through a number of free events held around the region that shone a light on the skills, hard work and sacrifice of first responders. The day was celebrated at the Highlands East Fire Department, Station Four in Wilberforce with a plethora of activities and information for everyone who came by. Events were also held in Algonquin Highlands at Station 60 in Dorset, Station 70 in Dwight, Station 60 in Stanhope, in Dysart et al. at the Dysart Fire Department and EMS Base, and in Minden Hills at the Minden Hills EMS Base and Fire Department.

Ontario first proclaimed First Responders Day on May 1 twelve years ago. This year, on April 23, Warden Dave Burton, who is also the mayor of Highlands East, proclaimed May 1 First Responders Day, with the following proclamation;

Whereas first responders are those who in the early stages of an emergency, are responsible for the protection and preservation of life, property, evidence and the environment; and

Whereas first responders include professions such as paramedics, police officers, firefighters, doctors, medical evacuation pilots, community emergency managers, road maintenance personnel, and military personnel; and

Whereas first responders commitment to duty is unwavering, responding to emergencies with courage, compassion and expertise, their skills often mean the difference between life and death; and

Whereas the services, dedication and commitment of first responders deserve to be recognized and honoured; and

Whereas in 2013 the Ontario Legislature proclaimed that May 1 of each year would be proclaimed First Responders Day;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That I, Warden Dave Burton, on behalf of Haliburton County Council, do hereby proclaim May 1 to be 'First Responders Day' in Haliburton County.

First responders include volunteers and professionals who work as police officers, firefighters, military personnel, paramedics, medical evacuation pilots, dispatchers, nurses, doctors, emergency medical technicians and emergency managers. On May 1, community members were able to visit open houses at bases, halls and stations to learn more about the critical role both professional and volunteer emergency responders have in keeping us safe. They were able to meet local and visiting emergency personnel, learn about programs and services, volunteer and career opportunities, understand how to prepare for emergencies, and get up close to emergency equipment and vehicles.

Sue Tiffin, director of community outreach for Haliburton County, told the *Minden Times* on April 29 that they are excited for First Responders Day 2025, the third annual event celebrating first responders in their community.

"The day honours the work of individuals who have dedicated their lives to public service and whose life-saving skills often make the difference between life and death. In our small community these are our family members, friends, neighbours, and they work – either professionally or as volunteers – to keep us safe. For the third year, members of the Haliburton County Paramedic Services, municipal fire departments, and the Haliburton Highlands OPP are coming together to invite the public to a Haliburton County-wide community open house to learn more about the critical work first responders do to keep our communities safe. At the April 23 County Council meeting, Warden Dave Burton proclaimed May 1 to be First Responders Day in Haliburton County," she says.

Tiffin says that it's a county-wide event unique to their community, and that while it's a day celebrated throughout Ontario in different ways, they haven't seen anything quite like this happening elsewhere yet. She says residents of all ages are invited to participating ambulance bases, fire halls and police stations in each municipality on May 1.

"The event gives folks a chance to stop in and meet their local emergency personnel, as well as visiting guests (for example, our HHOPP partners often bring K-9, and partners from victim services and CMHA-HKPR); learn more about programs and services offered; hear about volunteer and career opportunities; find out how to prevent or prepare for emergencies; and of course, get an up-close look at emergency equipment and vehicles. The event takes place rain or shine!" she said.

Tiffin reveals that new this year, two additional locations were added to Algonquin Highlands (in Dorset and Oxtongue Lake/Dwight); in Minden, the OPP joined the Minden Fire Department and Haliburton County Paramedic Service base in Minden at one stop rather than separate locations; Haliburton County's Community Paramedics was also at each base to display the equipment they use and discuss the critical and innovative role they play in health equity for our location community; and Haliburton County's new Paramedic Chief for Haliburton County was on site, meeting residents in both Haliburton and Minden.

"From a Community Safety and Well-Being perspective, it's important for community to get together when we can. As a community it's important for us to celebrate each other and recognize the work we do. This is a great opportunity for all of us to meet first responders when we're not in crisis, and to learn about what we can do to be proactive and take preventative measures to avoid an emergency response whenever possible," she says.

Tiffin said that she tried to attend as many of the events throughout the county, at least one in each local municipality. She says that each location is unique and it's a joy to visit them.

"We always hope there will be a great turn-out of visitors on First Responders Day, both to honour the first responders themselves, who put much effort into making this day special for the community, and to bring the community together to learn about safety, emergency preparation, and response. We remind residents that it's absolutely okay to stop by on their own, or also to bring a neighbour, their children, or grandchildren," she says.

see page 9

Callum McGee tests out an ATV with fire firefighter Stephen Hertel for First Responders Day. /THOMAS SMITH staff

Jason Kitchener gives a thumbs up while checking out a fire truck.

First Responders Day

Several MH firefighters were in attendance for First Responders Day. /KAREN LONDON staff

Jarrod Lawrence cooks up some burgers and hotdogs on the new barbecue dontated by Minden Canadian Tire. /THOMAS SMITH staff

from page 8

Burton told the *Times* on May 1 that it's totally impressive what first responders do.

"We can say that they're having a day for this but the years and years of training and to get qualified for what they do and how they do it and how many lives they've saved throughout that training. It's pretty remarkable and quite a dedication and they sure save a lot of lives," he said.

Chris Baughman is the fire chief for Highlands East, and says they get 300 to 325 calls per year, 50 or 60 of them being medical. As far as the questions they get during First Responders Day, he says the kids usually ask about the trucks and hoses and putting the gear on, while the adults query about the burn regulations and other general inquiries. He says it's not every person that can be a first responder.

"I hear it all the time. Oh, I wouldn't be doing that or how do you do it? A thank you goes a long way and we don't always hear that. That's usually all they're looking for is a thank you. They're not looking for any recognition to be a hero. It's just doing what they can when they can. Sometimes there's nothing you can do but at least you were there and tried. We appreciate any good will that comes our way," he says.

Baughman said on May 5 that due to the rainy weather, they had about 30 people come by, which was about half the number from last year when the weather was nicer.

"The responders certainly enjoy talking with the public, hearing their side of a personal emergency where they may have dealt with some of our responders. The thanks are much appreciated and these interactions help provide motivation to continue," he says.

Mike Slatter is the paramedic chief for Haliburton County and thought the day was awesome.

"I think it's a great recognition for all that the front-line people do every day. And it's nice to be able to meet people and show them a few things," he says.

Wade MacPherson is the paramedic deputy chief for Haliburton County and says that at the end of the day they serve the community.

"So much of what we do is behind closed doors with things like patient privacy, so it's nice to have these opportunities to open up and show people what we do. It's very important to us," he says.

On the day of the event, a steady rain reduced attendance numbers, in Wilberforce at least, but a fair number of people came by the fire station to say hello and query the first responders and have a look at the amazing artwork attached to the side of one of the fire trucks that local students had drawn to pay homage to the work that first responders do in their community. The Wilberforce FUNraising Group also had a full spread of cupcakes, cookies, fruits, vegetables and drinks for all those who came by.

Tiffin told the *Minden Times* on May 2 that as always, First Responders Day was a positive event, full of collaboration and community spirit.

"The event was held at six locations around Haliburton County this year. Despite the steady downpour of rain, the day was a great one. Each location really does the day differently – they all offer activities, learning opportunities, and resources – but from one location to the next the event differs, so you could visit multiple locations and have a different experience at each. Kids from throughout the county love the event, of course, and had a great opportunity to learn about the equipment that both our local teams and specialty teams use, and meet the first responders themselves. Some kids return year after year to participate. Adults – with or without kids – are able to ask questions, learn about resources available to prevent or prepare for emergency, and also get a close look at some of the equipment used. Many people in the community stopped by simply to say thanks," she says. "The event is also great for collaboration and networking between our emergency response teams who don't always get to be in the same place together."

Ryan and Jase Cox take a few minutes out of their First Responders fun to enjoy a smile cookie.

Local OPP team paused for a picture at the Minden Hills Fire Department. /KAREN LONDON staff

Thomas Carrell of Minden paused for a moment while he checking out one of the MH fire trucks.

Zilstra hangs up his publishing hat

by EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Doug Rowe of London Publishing thanked David Zilstra for his years of dedication to the industry. /TIM YANO staff photographer

It's all about the people.

For David Zilstra, that's what it's always been. Thirty-six years in the newspaper industry. Countless boards, organizations, and volunteer opportunities. Awards and plaques stacked up on his desk, including a nod as the community's Highlander of the Year.

But it's all about the people. That's what kept him going. Every step of the way.

After nearly four decades of dedication and service, Zilstra will be hanging up his publishing hat. He started with the *Haliburton Echo* in 2005, having already committed years to the industry in Napanee. He had originally started with sales and ad management, before naturally evolving into publishing and the multi-faceted components of that role.

Zilstra stepped away from the *Echo* briefly in 2009, before returning in 2014, and rebuilding the team, the drive, and the papers as a whole.

When he looked back on his career with the local papers, some of his favourite times include municipal election coverage. "I've seen a few," he chuckled. "But it's a fun time. People are wanting to run ads, they want to run news stories, you're talking to people on the street all the time. It's so busy, but it's exciting."

And Zilstra is no stranger to chatting with people on the street. When he was awarded Highlander of the Year in 2023, his connection with the community was top of mind. "As publisher of the *Haliburton County Echo*, *the Minden Times*, *County Life* and two other community newspapers in Bancroft, the constant face-to-face engagement with local business and the wider community that are a key aspect of his job has made him acutely aware of the area›s complex needs," read his nomination, sent in by a former colleague of Zilstra's.

He was an active member of the Haliburton BIA, Haliburton Rotary, the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation, and the Highlands Summer Festival, to name a few. "David Zilstra has distinguished himself as a community leader by providing thousands of hours of his time to make the Haliburton Highlands a standout place to work and live," said his nomination. "He has served as the publisher of three local newspapers during a tumultuous time in the media industry and provided high-quality year round jobs to many local residents."

When asked about his role as publisher, Zilstra didn't identify one singular task that keeps him busy. Rather, it's a plethora of ongoing projects that keep the papers running. "I like the fast paced life," he said. "And I want to make sure everyone has the tools they need to get things done here."

On Thursday, May 1, the *Echo* and *Times* hosted a retirement party for Zilstra, with over 100 locals popping by the offices to shake his hand and wish him well. "This is such a nice showing of community," noted Angelica Ingram, the manager of tourism for the County of Haliburton, and a former writer for the *Minden Times*. "It's so nice to see everyone come together for David."

Doug Rowe, who works for London Publishing, shared that he had worked with Zilstra for many years, and the two had set up a weekly phone call to discuss the ins and outs, the highs and lows, of the trade. "I have to say, it's been an absolute pleasure to work with David," he said, to a room of cheers and applause.

"I've had a great career," noted Zilstra, "and I appreciate everyone being here. With all the work and fun we have, we also make a lot of friends."

When asked what would be next for Zilstra, he quickly pointed out three priorities: golfing, biking, and kayaking. He is also looking forward to spending time with his wife, Marie, and starting some new adventures together. "But I'll be staying in the community, of course," he said, "because the biggest thing I'll miss is the people here."

Because for David Zilstra, it's all about the people.

From the teams at the *Haliburton Echo*, the *Minden Times*, *County Life*, and the Bancroft division, thank you to our fearless leader over the years. We wish you all the best in retirement.

Community events sponsored by
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Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Downtown Haliburton Sculpture Exhibition – Public Unveiling and Walking Tour
When: Wednesday, May 7, 2 p.m.
Where: Start at the Rails End Gallery
The Haliburton Sculpture Forest and the Haliburton BIA are hosting the 7th annual Downtown Haliburton Sculpture Exhibition this year. Join us at the Rails End Gallery for a walking tour of downtown Haliburton to see the sculptures and meet the artists.

Minden Curling Club Spring Dance
When: May 10, 4:30 to 10 p.m.
Where: Minden Curling Club
Roast Beef Dinner (Vegetarian available)
Dinner and Dance $45 pp. Music only from 6:30 p.m. $25 pp. Music by The Recycled Teenagers Lloyd and Susanne Taylor.
Everyone welcome! Tickets available at Let's Get Local & Molly's Market and Bakery or call Wynn Taylor 705-286-3286, Lynda Litwin 705-487-8511,Bob Barron 705-731-7730

Spring Wildflowers and Wild Leeks
When: Saturday May 10 at 10 a.m.
Where: Barnum Creek Nature Reserve
The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust is pleased to announce a new season of Land Trust Discovery Days programming partially funded by a TD Friends of the Environment Fund grant. Registration is required and admission is by donation. Please register at the HHLT website at www.haliburtonlandtrust.ca or by calling the office at 705-457-3700.

Mental Health Awareness
When: Tuesday, May 13 at 7 p.m.
Where: Schofield Room, Haliburton Legion, 719 Mountain St., Haliburton
A discussion with Theresa Maybury, a Mental Health and Addictions Clinician with the Canadian Mental Health Association--Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge. Theresa will explore with us core aspects of mental health, with a particular emphasis on two of the most common conditions: anxiety and depression. This is part of a continuing series on "Making our Communities Better Places", and will begin with music by local musician, Jodi Timgren. It is open to all, no admission charge, light refreshments provided. Hosted by the Baha'i community of Haliburton.

Friends of the Haliburton County Libraries - Mega Book Nook Sale
When: Saturday, May 17 at 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: Minden Hills Public Library.
Payment by Cash Donation. All money raised supports Library enhancements & programmes for all libraries in Haliburton County. Remember to bring your own bag!

Celebrating artists with Minden's newest restaurant

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

It's going to be bright, it's going to be bold, it's going to be colourful.

That's a guarantee.

For Fernando Diaz de Leon Rendon, he's looking to highlight all the colours of the community.

For the newest Lounge Cafe and Bistro in Minden, located at the former 50s Diner, he's been put in charge of adding colour to the walls. "I've put out an open call for artists," he said, "and we are going to keep changing it, like a different exhibition every few months."

Diaz de Leon Rendon moved to Haliburton with his partner in 2017, after visiting their Gooderham-based cottage for years. The couple chose the Kinmount region when they moved from Toronto, and haven't looked back. "It's a great community," said Diaz de Leon Rendon's partner, David Thairs. "It's been very accepting of all different people, very welcoming for everyone."

The couple dove into the local art scene, and connected with artists in an effort to showcase their work. With the Lounge Cafe and Bistro, Diaz de Leon Rendon has been tasked with highlighting the variety and depth available from local artists.

The new destination opened this past Sunday in a soft opening, and a formal grand opening scheduled for a later date. Manager Brock Williams hopes to create a space unlike any other that Minden has to offer. "We will be an espresso martini bar," he said. "Catering to beautiful looking food, a variety of artists and singers, in a relaxing atmosphere." For the majority of the week, the space will be open 6 a.m. until 9 p.m., offering meals all throughout the day, and on Fridays and Saturdays, the space will stay open until 2 a.m., with a newly expanded patio and a variety of drinks available.

Liz Feyerabend is one of the first artists being featured in the new cafe. She's been dabbling in the art world for years, but this is one of her first times showcasing her work in an exhibition-like style. "Art started out for me as a meditation practice," she said. "It was a way of helping me heal mentally. But now, it's just very colourful and bright. I make it to bring a little joy into the world."

Fernando Diaz de Leon Rendon and artist Liz Feyerabend hold up one of her paintings that will be displayed in the newly opened Lounge Cafe and Bistro in Minden. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

Feyerabend draws her inspiration from nature and the great outdoors; a theme that Diaz de Leon Rendon has combined in the show adorning the walls of the new cafe. "I want the atmosphere to be very relaxed," he said. "So we will be featuring different artists, and putting them together." He noted that he is open to highlighting solo shows, based on the artists he connects with along the way.

The curator of the space was thrilled with the outpouring of interest he received when he put out an open-call for artists online. "People keep sending art in, and I tell them that if they don't make it in this show, I take their name and number down and let them know that we can put it together in the next show." Diaz de Leon Rendon hopes to switch out the artwork every few months, to keep the space fresh and bright.

The artists featured in the coming weeks will be: Liz Feyerabend, Jen Hodges, Ritchie Stardreamer Sinclair, Zach Warne, Brona Wingell, and Fernando Diaz de Leon Rendon. The recurring theme to the current show is colour. Bright, bold, energetic pops of colour from artists all over the county. While the restaurant is eager to highlight local talent, they are also open to inviting artists who cottage in the area in an effort to celebrate all visitors.

> "It's just very colourful and bright. I make it to bring a little joy into the world."
>
> – LIZ FEYERABEND, ARTIST

"Lounge Cafe Bistro Restaurant is thrilled to feature local artistic talent, showcasing diverse styles that promote positivity and relaxation," said Diaz de Leon Rendon. "Our carefully curated selection of artworks aims to create a serene and uplifting atmosphere."

The new restaurant is located at 12311 Highway 35 in Minden.

If you are interested in sharing your art with the space, contact Fernando at fernandoartstudio@icloud.com or 416-985-1543. They are seeking modern and contemporary art styles in all mediums, but must be ready to hang. All pieces can be sold from the facility, with no commission charged.

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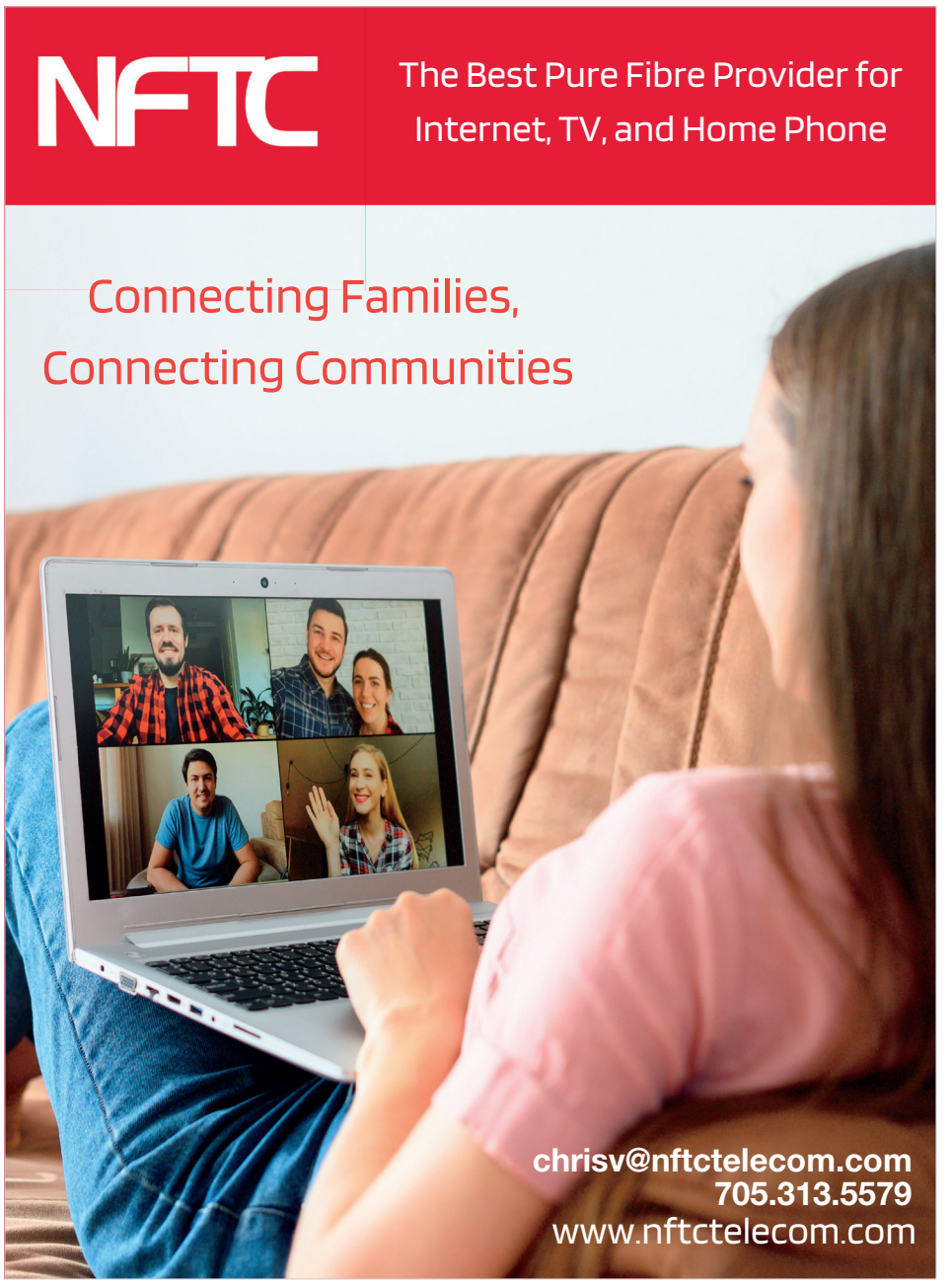

The boys are back in town

The Huskies rookie camp kicked off this past weekend, with both new and returning players hitting the ice at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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Answers on page 14

CHA dives into local poop talks

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

What do septic inspectors and four-year-old children have in common?

They like to talk about poop. Sometimes around the dinner table.

But as Rob Davis pointed out at the 17th annual Lake Health meeting on May 3, we should all be talking about poop a lot more.

The meeting was put on by the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners Associations (CHA) - an organization entirely dedicated to protecting and enhancing the health of the lakes across Haliburton County.

With septic health on top of mind in an effort to sustain and maintain the shorelines and waterways across the region, the meeting was an apt location to showcase *Poop Talk, the Number 2*, a creation of Sticks and Stones Media.

"The purpose of this video is to get everyone to understand how to improve the quality of water on their lakes," opened Tammy Rea of Sticks and Stones.

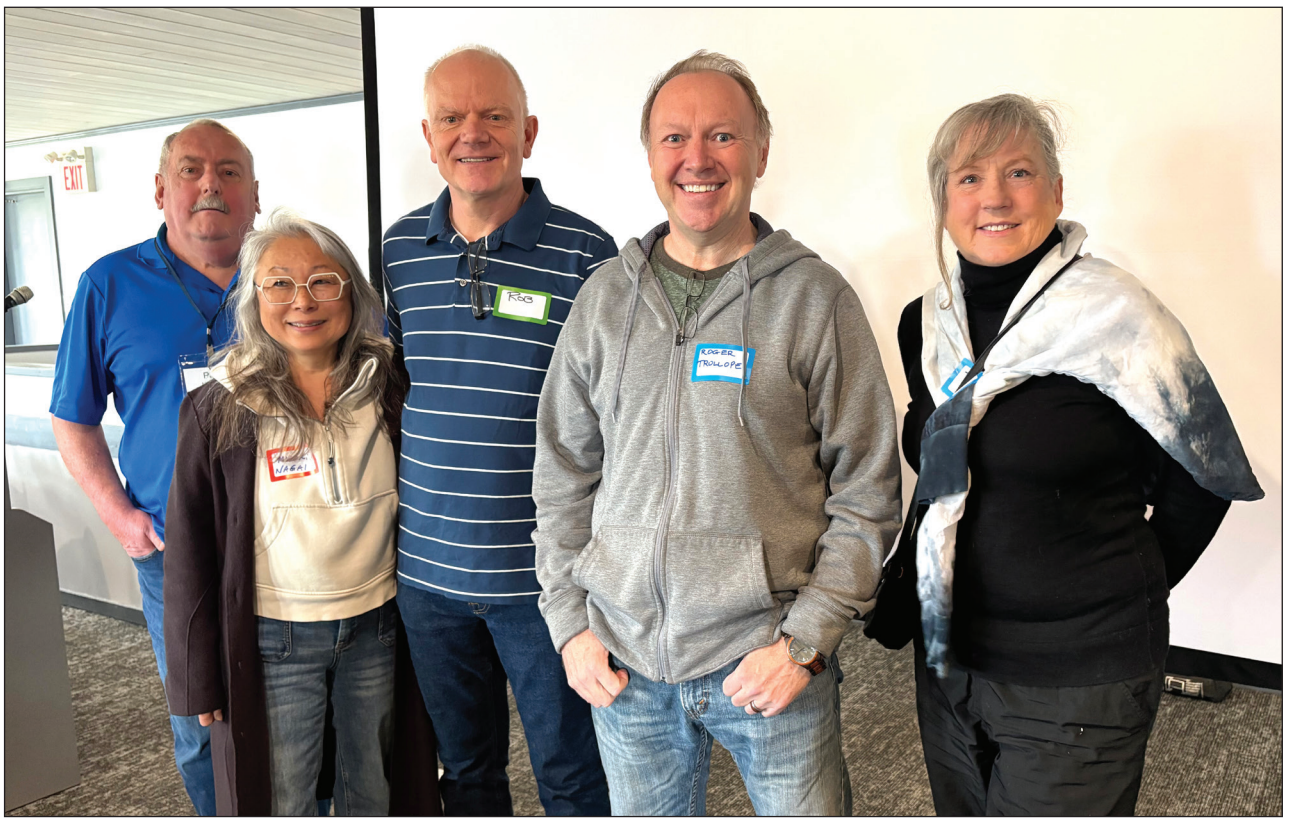
The short film - which is available on the CHA website - is a sequel to the original *Poop Talk*, which was filmed a few years ago in Haliburton and shared widely online. It was quickly picked up by education forums, including the education system in Australia, as a tool to educate and explain the complexities of septic systems.

With so much engagement, Sticks and Stones, alongside septic specialist Rob Davis, decided to give it a go again; this time, with *Poop Talk, the Number 2.* The film was put together by a group of dedicated individuals, whom Paul McInnes, the President of the CHA, refers to as 'the Dream Team'.

With additional support from the Haliburton County Development Corporation, the group took to tackling the topic of poop, and best practices for keeping your property up to par. "We need to start thinking about our septic systems the same way we think about our digestive systems," opens Davis, who narrates the film.

It goes on to continue the comparison between the human body and a standard septic system; both using varying bacterias to break down components for maximum health, both following a track from start to finish, and both needing regular maintenance and upkeep in order to stay healthy and working properly.

When there is an imbalance of phosphorus and nitrogen seeping from the septic tanks, they can leach into lakes, rivers, and waterways, which throws off the fine balance of the natural world. An excess of these elements in a lake would cause excessive growth of aquatic plants, and toxic algae blooms. On top of these blooms significantly impacting your property value (with an identified decrease of 30 per cent or more,) they also kill off fish and wildlife, harm swimmers, and throw off the entire balance of the lake.



The 'Dream Team' who put the film *Poop Talk, the Number 2* together, in an effort to raise awareness around septic and lake health. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

"Every time you send water down the drain, an equal amount of liquid effluent - that's the stuff that leaves the septic tank - is disposed of on the property," said Davis.

If the bacteria does not have time to properly break down the contents of the tank, you run the risk of polluting your property and waterways.

So what are the septic sins that can cause these imbalances? Number one: overuse. "Spread out your water use," says Davis, noting that the systems are only designed to break down a small amount at a time, and they need to pace it out in order for the microbiomes to process the waste effectively.

Next up comes chemicals. "Many household products we use every day contain harsh chemicals or detergents which kill or inhibit the bacteria's ability to do their job," noted Davis.

The third cause for problems is inadequate septic maintenance. Just like the need to get a medical check up every few years, your septic tank requires the same maintenance, to ensure things are running smoothly.

Next up is the wrong volume of microbes. Being mindful of what we put in our septic system that is beyond human waste will impact the type of bacteria needed to thrive.

Of course, the environment plays a big role in maintaining septic health. "We all need to take care of the land between our septics and our bodies of water," noted Davis.

Lastly, water softeners and iron filters also play a role in impacting the balance of the systems.

The film goes on to discuss seasonal use around septic tanks; a topic which is relevant to the many cottagers in the area.

Blue-green algae has been found every year in Haliburton County for the past 11 years. In 2024, it was identified in dozens of lakes across the region. Proper septic health and awareness are key in mitigating the risks associated with the blooms.

In appreciation for the dedication and hard work for the organizers of the film - over 40 hours of filming for an eight-minute product - the CHA presented the Dream Team with one acre of protected land in Dahl Forest in each of their names. It was a teary acceptance, with gratitude around the awareness the film is bringing to the new audiences.

Poop Talk, the Number 2 is available on the CHA website, at www.cohpoa.org.

Watershed health is a shared responsibility, says stakeholder

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

You don't have to be an angler to take steps toward ensuring the health of lakes and waterways.

That little nugget of truth was one of the take-aways from a Watersheds Canada conference May 1-2 at the Pinestone Resort Golf and Conference Centre. Lake and watershed enthusiasts converged in Haliburton to share information and benefit from stewardship project demonstrations.

Lake health stakeholders, environmental professionals, provincial environment officials, and others shared success stories and discovered science-driven practical solutions against the threats to waterway health.

Carolyn Langdon, the Haliburton County Master Gardeners' coordinator, said one of the best ways property owners can improve lake and waterway health is by keeping shorelines as natural as possible.

"Water goes from high to low," she said. "When water travels through land, it travels high to low. So if it can travel through a forest or through vegetated spaces, there's a better chance that the water is slowed down and it's filtered and cleaned before it reaches the lake."

And that's how watersheds are kept healthy, she said.

Watersheds Canada has hosted many events through the years, but this was the first time the organization held a national conference. They decided to have it in Haliburton County.

And that's something to be proud of, she said.

"It was such a compliment that they chose Haliburton for their very first conference," she said.

Top scientific talent and grassroots volunteers from across the country took part. They're the best chance for the future of Canada's lakes and rivers, she said. That concerns is the common tie that bound them.

"The water quality, when it comes to freshwater quality, a lot of it lands on volunteers," Langdon said.

Haliburton County adopted within the last few years bylaws designed to maintain the integrity of the many local shorelines. Stipulations in the bylaw applies to new builds on lake fronts. That leaves the various lake associations an opening to work with owners of pre-existing properties to preserve shorelines.

Langdon said lake associations have been tasked with educating their memberships, the residents on their respective lakes, on how properties can be re-naturalized.

"Everybody in Haliburton County lives within one kilometre of some form of water, whether it's a pond, a stream, a wetland," she said. "One kilometre is nothing. Whatever you do, eventually it all drains into the lake."

The Gull River watershed drains from the county to environments south. So what is done in this county impacts other communities in the south.

> "Whatever you do, eventually it all drains into the lake."
>
> — CAROLYN LANGDON, MASTER GARDENER

"We have a responsibility to keep the waters as clean as possible for ourselves, but also for those of us farther south," Langdon said. "They can't do anything about our activities and, because we are so far north and pretty close to the top of the water source, it puts a lot of responsibility on us."

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Mental health coffee house, coming soon

Theresa Maybury, a Mental Health and Addictions Clinician with the Canadian Mental Health Association's Mobile Wellness Clinic called The Road Ahead (TRA) and a Health Educator with CMHA, will lead a discussion on Mental Health, with a particular focus on anxiety and depression, at a Community Coffee House to be held on Tuesday, May 13 at 7 p.m. The Road Ahead program is responsible for providing therapeutic intervention to underserved communities in remote and rural areas outside the major access points in Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough and Northumberland counties.

Working under the umbrella of the mental health sector for more than 12 years, Theresa is currently working on a Masters degree in Psychotherapy, having completed an Honours Psychology degree with a minor in Psychology and an Honours Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour degree in Human Behaviour. Gravitating to healing roles, Theresa emphasizes that mental health exists on a spectrum, noting that we all have mental health, as we all have physical health, with both deserving of our attention, awareness and care.

The Coffee House sessions always begin with a half our of music, this month provided by local singer/songwriter Jodi Timgren, who many of you will know from concerts and venues in the area, collaborating often with other musicians in the area, including Richard Joudrey, Rich Anton and Silva Musica.

Previous presentations under the overarching theme of this series of Coffee Houses of "Making Our Communities Better Places" have included Finding One's Own Power to be a source for change in our communities, The Power of One related to the environment, Creating Places of Support in the field of Youth Mental Health and Social Media, Supporting our Youth in Challenging Times, Addictions, Metabolic Flexibility, and Mindful Nature Connections.

This Coffee House will be held on Tuesday, May 13 at 7 p.m. in the Schofield Room of the Haliburton Legion.

These gatherings are free of charge, with no need for advance registration, open to all, with light refreshments available, and are hosted by the Baha'is of Haliburton to provide a place for safe and healthy discussion on issues of interest in the support and building of community.

Submitted

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Minden Horticultural Society sale is rain or shine

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Times Staff

In the wake of the ice storm, spring has sprung and with it, renewal is in the air.

Nothing signifies spring like getting out and digging your garden beds, shooing away the deer, and plotting out your garden for the year.

To aid in your garden beautification journey, the Minden and District Horticultural Society are already gathering seedlings, plants, and other native plant species for their annual plant sale.

"All plants for the sale are hardy to this area," assures Tammy Lynas, organizer of this year's plant sale.

"This is our biggest fundraising event of the year."

Last year, the Horticultural Society had nearly 90 members. Every plant that is sold at the plant sale is grown and donated by their members. Vegetable seedlings were started in late winter in preparation for the sale.

With members often donating over 20 plants to the sale, the Horticultural Society is planning for this year's sale to be their biggest yet. To add to the festivities, they have invited vendors to participate in the sale. Participating vendors include a local potter, woodcarver, artisanal birdhouse maker, and a lemonade stand run by the Junior Horticultural Society members.

Lynas has been a proud gardener her entire life.

"I love just getting down and getting dirty," said Lynas with a laugh. "I love the physicality and the hard work."

Hostas are one of the many plants being offered at the Horitcultural Society's annual plant sale in Minden. /FILE

Like many gardeners, Lynas' parents were gardeners, teaching her a love of gardening.

While the precise list of species that will be available remains uncertain until the day of the sale, Lynas assures that there will be a variety of perennials, native plants, shrubs, and other seedlings. Common vegetables they have had for sale in the past include tomatoes, cucumbers and kale.

This plant sale is the perfect opportunity for anyone that has been on the fence about starting a garden.

"They can get plants at a very good price," said Lynas.

With the sale being run entirely by members, Lynas assures that those new to gardening will be able to have all of their questions answered by seasoned Haliburton county gardeners.

The Horticultural Society is responsible for the upkeep of garden beds in town, at the Minden Legion, and the new garden bed at the Fire Station near Highway 35.

The community is exceptionally grateful for the gardeners, says Lynas. It is not uncommon for their members to be stopped while working in a garden bed to be thanked by a community member.

"We have more gardens to look after than we have volunteers," said Lynas.

The Minden and District Horticultural Society is always looking for new members. The society meets monthly and watches a guest speaker every month. Membership for the year is a $20 donation.

Lynas' favourite flower to grow is hydrangeas.

"I just think they are beautiful, showy, and I have good luck at my place," said Lynas.

This year's annual plant sale will be held on Saturday, May 17 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. located at 63 Bobcaygeon Road in Minden.

The event will be rain or shine. Cash, e-transfers, and debit can be accepted for purchases at the event.

"We work in the rain," said Lynas with a laugh. "It doesn't matter to us."

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In Loving Memory of

Parkes, Georgina Audrey (nee McCrory)

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of our mom, Georgina, on Thursday April 24, 2025 at the age of 96.

Beloved wife of the late Harold Parkes, loving mom of Denise (Paul Westbrook), Karen and Suzanne, loving grandma of Andrew (Corrie), Kelsey (William), Samantha (Jamie) and Lindsey (James) and great-grandma of Elliot, Riley, Harper and Caden.

Georgina will be missed by family and friends, but we take comfort in the many wonderful memories we share, and that she will now be reunited with Harold.

A private service and internment will take place at Park Lawn Cemetery, Toronto. A Celebration of Life will be held in the summer, with the date to be published.

Memorial donations to the R.C.L. Branch #636 Memorial Fund in lieu of flowers would be appreciated by the family.

Barbara "Jeanette" Clifford (nee Adaway)
Resident of Haliburton

Barbara "Jeanette" Clifford (née Adaway) passed away peacefully on April 28, 2025, at the Haliburton Hospital in her 95th year, with her loving son Steve by her side. She is now reunited with her husband, Bob, her daughter June, her grandchild Jim, and his partner Diane, who predeceased her.

Barbara was born in England on November 5th, 1929, to her parents, George and Amelia Adaway (both predeceased). Barbara and Bob immigrated to Canada after the war, bringing with them the warmth, strength, and graciousness that would define their lives. She settled in Ontario, where she embraced her role as the quintessential 1950s housewife—elegant, poised, and always ready to host with grace and a warm smile. Her home was often the center of laughter and conversation, especially during the many last-minute dinner parties her beloved husband Bob would spring on her for friends and coworkers.

Barbara had a deep love for the outdoors, and she thrived in the Haliburton Highlands, where she spent decades snowmobiling through the trails she came to know so well. When not outside enjoying nature, she found solace in her garden and joy in the pages of her favorite books.

She is remembered with love by her son Steve, her dear sister Kathleen and brother-in-law Raymond, her granddaughter-in-law, Jody, and her great-great-grandson JT (Gabriella), along with extended family and friends.

Barbara's family wishes to extend heartfelt thanks to Dr. Gilmour and the caring medical staff at the Haliburton Hospital for their compassion and support. A very special thank you goes to her devoted friend Maggie, whose love, care, and unwavering dedication brought comfort and companionship to Barbara in her later years.

Barbara's legacy of hospitality, warmth, and spirited independence will live on in the hearts of all who knew her

Funeral Arrangements

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As per Barbara's wishes, cremation has taken place. As an expression of sympathy, donations in Barbara's memory to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation would be appreciated by the family. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy. #118 Haliburton, Ontario K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209.

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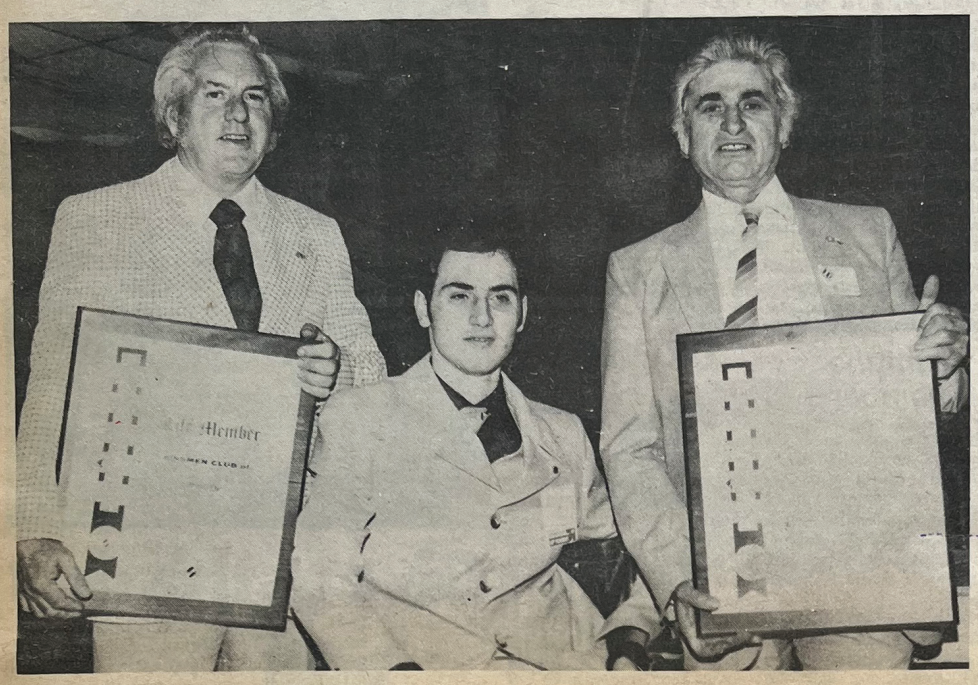

They're in for life. Don Nye, left, and Pete Dollo, right, pose with Minden Kinsmen Club president Rob Young after being presented with plaques and a life membership in the organization. The presentations were part of the *local club's twenty-fifth anniversary* celebrations which took place Saturday evening at the Community Centre. The award came as a surprise to both Kinsmen.

Kinsmen mark 25th - 2 named life members

Minden Kinsmen celebrated Saturday evening as members of the local service club marked their twenty-fifth anniversary and inducted two of their number as life members in the organization.

The life membership honour was bestowed on Peter Dollo and Don Nye. The two candidates were unaware that they were to receive the honour and, while they were out of the room preparing to enter with the head table guests, a banner proclaiming their new status in the club was strung across the hall.

Prior to receiving the plaques and life memberships, both Kinsmen were roasted by their fellow members. Lyle McKnight recalled a number of humorous incidents involving Don Nye while Eldon Deacon recounted several amusing stories involving Pete Dollo.

Both expressed surprise and pleasure at being given a life membership in Kinsmen and commented that the club activities in helping the community had also enriched their own lives.

Congratulations on the club's anniversary were brought by numerous officials and national Kinsmen executive. Murray Fearrey, the Warden of Haliburton County, and Deputy Reeve Doug Pritchard representing the municipality added their appreciation to the congratulations received.

Members of the Kinette Club of Minden presented the Local Kinsmen with a banner on which the objectives and aims of the club were inscribed.

The evening concluded with a dance.

April weather

by Phil Graham

	C	F
Average high	11.8	53.2
Average low	-1.1	30
Average for the month	5.3	41.5
Average for April 1980	5.7	42.2
Highest temperaure, April 3	21.5	70.7
Lowest temperature, April 21	-10	14
Rainfall	83 mm	3.2 in.
Days with thunderstorms	2	

There was only 3/10 of a degree difference between the average temperature this past April compared to last year. The biggest difference was in precipitation. We received one inch more than last year. The lakes were clear of ice by April 5.

Board announces school tax shares

The division of the Haliburton County School Board budget was announced last week and, as expected, education taxes in Haliburton will be increasing an average of 13.5%. The increases varying from a low of 8.9% for the Improvement District of Bicroft to just over 22% for the township of Monmouth.

The board's total budget for the year is up 13.1% to $5,934,000. This is an increase of $685,000 over last year. Of that total 1981 expenditure, the provincial government supplies $2,260,000, leaving $3,428,000 to be obtained through local taxes.

The following chart lists the levy being requested by the school board from each municipality and the per centage increase. The figures in the brackets are 1980 amounts:

Anson, Hindon & Minden: $686,263--13.9% ($602,512)
Cardiff: $173,706--10.4% ($157,290)
Dysart et al: $1,066,092--13.7% ($937,733)
Glamorgan: $217,245--11.4% ($194,953)
Lutterworth: $256,856--12.4% ($228,538)
Monmouth: $138,389--22.1% ($113,345)
Sherborne et al: $314,909--14.6% ($274,731)
Snowdon: $114,217--12.3% ($101,752)
Stanhope: $406,450--12.7% ($360,795)
Bicroft Improvement District: $54,043--8.9% ($49,645)

According to the board of education figures, it will cost $2,030.23 to teach a child at the elementary level during 1981 while education at the secondary level will cost $2,998.02 per student for the year.

Kayak season opens with Ont. team trials

The kayaking season officially gets underway this weekend as the Gull River takes place at the Horseshoe Lake falls and rapids.

Kayak enthusiasts were in the chilly water last weekend, warming-up for the event this weekend which will help decide members for the Ontario white water kayaking team. The competitions will be taking place May 9 and 10.

Participating in the team trials will be Claudia Kerckoff, a kayaking champion. Claudia is 20 years of age and has been challenging white water since age 12. Her interest in the sport can be traced back to her parents, both of whom hold numerous honours in kayaking.

Her father, Herman, has been the Canadian Men's Champion five times and winner of the North American Championship. Herman also represented Canada at the Munich Olympics.

Claudia's mother, Christa, was the women's kayaking champion in 1969 and 1970 and has served as coach for her husband.

The team trials this weekend will be a prelude to the major white water event of the year at the new run. The Canadian White Water championships will be held June 13 and 14 at the same location with top competitors from across the country taking part.

Waiting tensely on the starting line, participants in one of the many running events during the HHSS track and field meet listen for the sound of the starter's gun. The high school meet was held Wednesday to select competitors for Kawartha West inter-school competitions scheduled for this week at HHSS. For the results of Wednesday's meet, turn to page 8.

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